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25X1

NSC BRIEFING 5 October 1954

CHINESE OFFSHORE ISLANDS

I. Although shelling of Quemoys less than 100 rounds per day since 22 September, Communist artillery reportedly being relocated and resupplied and heavy shelling may be resumed at any time.

A. One tank sighted on mainland,

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"very large" tanks moving through Foochow toward Amoy in mid-September.

B. Possible use of Communist air at Quemoy--unconfirmed--is questionable report of Nationalist plane attacked by fighter on 2 October.

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C. Quemoy commander reports--unconfirmed--Communist troops concentrating in Amoy area, use of 20 motorized junks in landing exercises. 25X1X4

D. [redacted] both loudspeakers near the Quemoys and Communist radio have announced islands will be in Communist hands by 15 October. 25X1X4

E. As result these developments, Nationalist Defense Ministry and MAAG observers believe assault on some of Quemoys a "distinct possibility" at any time.

II. Nationalists have reinforced Quemoy garrison. Arrival 60 light tanks 2 October brings total to 98, plus 12 75mm assault guns.

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A. Quemoy garrison now some 53,500 regulars, plus some 1,350 guerrillas. Nationalist artillery totals: 52 75mm howitzers (4 battalions plus); 77 105mm howitzers (6 battalions plus); 5 155mm guns (1 battery plus); 12 155mm howitzers (1 battalion) and 12 40mm AA guns (2 batteries).

III. Near the Matsus, Communist activity continues. On 27 September, 1,000 junks and two larger vessels were spotted opposite the islands.

A. This large shipping concentration very probably explained by run of "yellow fish"--a Chinese delicacy--in coastal waters.

B. On 29 Sept 200 of these junks approached Matsus but withdrew when Nationalists fired two shells.

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Incident apparently source of Formosa press claim that Communist "invasion" was repelled.

C. Just such fishing, however, could provide natural cover for suprise assault on Matsus: so long as junks concentrated, threat remains.

D. Matsu commander has reported several "unidentified" aircraft recently. Perhaps Communist, although commander complains he gets no information on Nationalist air operations and planes might equally well be Nationalist.

IV. Matsu garrison (3,000 regulars, perhaps 2,400 guerrillas) is alert to possibility of attack.

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A. However, [redacted] fortifications scanty and defense plans "not impressive."

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V. Communist activity in Tachen area is marked by increasing air patrols along coast from Ningpo and over islands.

A. Both MIG 15 jets and LA-11 piston fighters used; have made several flights over islands. Seldom attack ground targets, but have strafed Nationalist naval vessels in harbor.

B. Increasing activity due largely to weakness Nationalist AA and to fact that Formosa-based fighters seldom challenge.

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C. [redacted] move of new jet fighter division from Yalu to Nanking-Shanghai area, probably in early September. If correct, MIG strength in the Shanghai complex (within range of the Tachens) would rise from 220 to 270.

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[redacted] says

many Communist naval vessels now concentrating in Choushans, one of chief Communist naval bases. Attack on Tachens would probably come either from Choushans, where the Chinese Communist 22nd Army (50,000 troops) is located: or from Haimen, where 20th Army located and shipping concentration reported fortnight ago.

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E. [redacted]

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Yangtze estuary closed to non-military shipping and, on 30 Sept., patrolled by Soviet vessels. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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VI. Nationalist opinion divided on relative threat to different islands.

A. Tachen garrison commander reportedly believes Communists will not attack his position at this time; considers a full-scale attack on Quemoy more likely.

B. This view not shared by Chiang Ching-kuo, who believes attack on Tachens more likely than assault on Quemoy.

C. In view Communist coastal strength, none of islands appears safe from attack; all could conceivably be assaulted simultaneously.

D. "Cheapest" operation would be against Matsus. Capture of Quemoy would be costliest venture, but highest in prestige value. "Liquidation" of Tachens probably represents middle balance between cost and prestige.

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NSC BRIEFING 5 October 1954

AMOY CAUSEWAY

I. A correction - [redacted] 25X1

25X1 [redacted] completion of causeway linking island of Amoy with mainland, study [redacted] 25X1X4 shows 90-foot gap at Amoy end.

A. Incomplete causeway does not prevent Communist attack on Quemoys, however. Sufficient shipping is available to ferry supplies for assault forces on the island, or such forces could be assembled in other nearby areas.

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